CLAIM AMENDMENTS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended). A method of ~~defining~~ <u>constructing</u> an exchange-traded fund, which comprises:

searching for publicly traded securities and a history of dividend yields associated with the respective securities;

sorting the securities relative to an amount of the associated dividend yields, and rating the securities based on the associated dividend yields;

placing a plurality of the securities into the exchange-traded fund and weighting the individual securities within the exchange-traded fund in accordance with the associated dividend yields; and

<u>on a stock exchange,</u> offering for sale shares in the exchange-traded fund.

Claim 2 (original). The method according to claim 1, wherein the searching step comprises also searching for a price-earnings ratio associated with the respective securities, and weighting the respective securities in the exchange-traded fund with the price-earnings ratio and the amount of the associated dividend yields.

Claims 3-4 (canceled).

Claim 5 (currently amended). A virtual securities broker for assisting a customer in generating and purchasing a dividend-weighted fund instrument from a merchant, comprising:

a database containing customer information with identification and preferences related to the customer;

a client system for prompting the customer to either select a predefined query specifying search parameters or to input the search parameters, the search parameters including a dividend yield;

a server system programmed to search, via the Internet, for ~~securities~~ stocks satisfying the search parameters and to transmit a search result identifying the ~~securities~~ stocks satisfying the search parameters to said client system; and

a purchase processing system, connected to said server system and adapted to receive a purchase order from the customer via said client system, for at least some of the ~~securities~~ stocks satisfying the search parameters and to fill the purchase order.

Claim 6 (currently amended). The virtual securities broker according to claim 5, wherein said client system is configured to display to the customer a

percentage dividend yield defined by a percentage ratio of past dividend

distribution over a given period of time relative to the price of the ~~security~~ <u>stock</u>.

Claim 7 (canceled).

Claim 8 (original). In an electronic commerce system having a computer

system configured to search for securities, a history of dividend yields

associated with the respective securities, and price-earnings ratios associated

with the respective securities, a method of generating and offering for sale an

exchange-traded fund, which comprises:

upon receiving an initiation request from a customer, checking a database

containing customer information with identification and preferences related to

the customer;

prompting the customer to select a predefined set of dividend-yielding

securities or to input parameters for a new search defining a new set of

dividend-yielding securities;

searching for securities matching the parameters associated with the set of

dividend-yielding securities, placing a plurality of the securities into the

exchange-traded fund, weighting the individual securities within the exchange-

traded fund in accordance with the associated dividend yields, and rating the

securities based on an amount of the associated dividend yields; and

offering for sale shares in the exchange-traded fund.

Claim 9 (original). The method according to claim 8, wherein the searching step comprises also searching for a price-earnings ratio associated with the respective securities, and weighting the respective securities in the exchange-traded fund with the price-earnings ratio and the amount of the associated dividend yields.

Claim 10 (currently amended). A method of placing an order in a securities-trading system having a server system connected in a network and a client system connected to the server system, which comprises:

under control of the client system, prompting a user for input selecting from available ~~securities~~ stocks with a history of dividend distribution, the input specifying search parameters including a dividend yield;

under control of the server system, searching the network for ~~securities~~ stocks matching the search parameters and transmitting search results to the client system;

under control of the client system, displaying the search results to the user and prompting the user for further action, the further action including further input for a new search and placing a purchase order for a ~~security~~ stock or a

collection of ~~securities~~ <u>stocks</u> having a history of dividend distribution satisfying the search parameters.

Claim 11 (previously presented). The method according to claim 10, wherein the input selects either a predefined set of the search parameters or is a newly entered set of the search parameters.

Claim 12 (currently amended). The method according to claim 10, wherein the dividend yield is defined by a percentage ratio of past dividend distribution over a given period of time relative to a price of the ~~security~~ <u>stock</u>.

Claims 13-14 (canceled).

Claim 15 (previously presented). The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of rating the securities is performed by rating the securities based solely on the associated dividend yields.